



**Washington State
Department of Transportation**

Executive Order

Number: E 1004.00

/s/ Douglas B. MacDonald
Secretary of Transportation

Date: October 22, 2001

ETHICS IN PUBLIC SERVICE

Introduction

Ethics in public service is the personal responsibility of each Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) employee, and is governed by the State Ethics Law. WSDOT employees must collectively maintain the highest standards of honesty, integrity, impartiality, and conduct in the performance of official duties. By doing so, we ensure that WSDOT continues to uphold the highest level of public confidence.

Supersession

This supersedes and replaces Executive Order E 1004.00 dated August 24, 2001.

Background

The 1994 Legislature passed into law Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 6111. This bill established ethical standards for all state officers and employees within the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. The standards were codified in a single chapter of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) Chapter 42.52, Ethics In Public Service. The new law took effect January 1, 1995.

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All department employees shall adhere to the provisions of RCW 42.52, Ethics in Public Service, and to the rulings of the Ethics Board. Failure to do so will result in corrective action. The following rules are established to achieve compliance with the Ethics Law:

I. Training

An ethical standards self-study course will be distributed to new employees, both permanent and non-permanent, on their first day of employment. Each employee

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is required, as a condition of employment, to satisfactorily complete the course in the prescribed manner.

II. Managers and Supervisors Responsibilities

Managers and supervisors are responsible for discussing the requirements of the Ethics Law RCW 42.52 with employees at least annually. Supervisors and managers will let employees know what resources are available to get more information and answer specific questions about the Ethics Law. (Note: Copies of RCW 42.52 are available through the Internet.)

III. WSDOT Ethics Rules

The Ethics Board issues formal Advisory Opinions to answer questions about the Ethics Law. The Ethics Board has given individual agencies the flexibility to make rules in specific areas. In addition, certain RCWs and WACs give individual agencies this flexibility.

So that the department can participate in these activities ethically, the following rules are in effect for all WSDOT employees:

A. Combined Fund Drive Activities

- Basis of Authority: *Ethics Board Advisory Opinion 00-09* "Use of State Resources/Combined Fund Drive"

Assigned WSDOT employees may participate in activities to carry out the Department of Personnel's Combined Fund Drive, within the following limits:

1. Supervisor review and approval is required in advance.
2. Resources used may not exceed basic supplies and equipment, such as computers and copy machines.

B. Other Organization-Wide Charitable Activities

- Basis Of Authority: *Ethics Board Advisory Opinion 96-11* "State Employees - De Minimis Use Of State Resources - Charity"; WAC 292-110-010 (4) (b) Use of State Resources

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Organization-wide charitable activities must be approved by an Executive (a direct report to the Office of the Secretary), with the same limits as in A. above.

C. Individual Employee Fund Raising

→ Basis of Authority: *WAC 292-110-010 (4) (b) and (c) Use of State Resources*

A WSDOT employee may solicit funds for a charitable organization while at work within the following limits:

1. The employee must use regular breaks, lunch hour, or annual leave for the activity.
2. The activity cannot interfere with work being done by others.
3. This section does not include approval for transactions by private businesses.
4. Examples of approved activities include, but are not limited to, the intermittent or seasonal sale of candy bars, flowers, fruit, wrapping paper, and entertainment discount books by school and sports groups, community service groups, and youth organizations.
5. Use of basic supplies and equipment, such as computers and copy machines, is not allowed.

D. Appropriate De Minimis Use of E-Mail

→ Basis of Authority: *Ethics Board Advisory Opinion 96-04 - "De Minimis Use Of State Resources"*

An employee may send a brief e-mail about a topic listed below to individuals in the department who would be interested:

- Congratulatory messages
- Birth and death announcements
- Brief family communications per WAC 292-110-010

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E. Connecting State/Private Electronic Devices

→ Basis of Authority: *Ethics Board Advisory Opinion 96-04* - "De Minimis Use Of State Resources"

An employee may connect a personally owned electronic device (including, but not limited to, Palm Pilots, Personal Data Assistants, etc.) to a state-owned device or network for the purpose of coordinating/synchronizing family schedules, appointments, contacts, to-do lists, notes, and e-mail. Information related to a private business or political events should be deleted from WSDOT provided computers, databases, and servers.

Employees must also comply with other WSDOT policies designed to protect the safety and security of the state's interests. WSDOT workstation support staff can provide some minor assistance to employees in the setup of the connection, but cannot troubleshoot or analyze problems related to operation of non-state-owned equipment.

F. Toastmasters International Meetings

→ Basis of Authority: *Ethics Board Advisory Opinion 96-04* - "De Minimis Use Of State Resources"

The department believes that participation in Toastmasters International can enhance both an employee's and the organization's effectiveness. However, it is an employee's personal choice whether or not to participate in Toastmasters International meetings. Therefore, de minimis use of state resources for participation in Toastmasters is allowed, within the following limits:

1. No travel time or per diem is allowed for attending Toastmasters meetings.
2. Use of a state owned conference room for Toastmasters meetings is permitted during the standard lunch hour of Noon until 1:00 p.m., as long as the conference room is not needed for state business.
3. For those employees with a thirty minute lunch break, an agreement with their management must be set up in advance to use approved leave or schedule adjustments for the additional thirty minutes needed to attend the Toastmaster's meeting.

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4. Di minimis use of state owned resources is limited to exchanging information related to Toastmasters meetings, such as meeting announcements and agendas.
5. Use of state resources to promote Toastmasters is not permitted.

Alternate Formats: Persons with disabilities may request this information be prepared and supplied in alternate formats by calling the WSDOT ADA Accommodation Hotline collect 206-389-2839. Persons with hearing impairments may access WA State Telecommunications Relay Service at TT 1-800-833-6388, Tele-Braille 1-800-833-6385, or Voice 1-800-833-6384, and ask to be connected to (360) 705-7097.

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